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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/888,071	06/22/2001	Arturo De La Cruz	WEAT/0122	6610

36735 7590 05/25/2005

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HOUSTON, TX 77056-6582

EXAMINER

SAETHER, FLEMMING

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3677

DATE MAILED: 05/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/888,071	CRUZ ET AL.01	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Flemming Saether	3677	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 March 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-9 and 24-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-9 and 24-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-9 and 24-26 are alternatively rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Rallis (US 6,413,326). Rallis discloses a sucker rod coupling formed a internally threaded hollow cylindrical blank member, referencing the US patent number 5,334,268 to Hermanson (column 2, lines 16-30 and again at column 5, lines 4-16) which teaches the specifics of coupling as discussed above. Rallis further disclose the threads on the sucker rod coupling having the material properties of Hermanson to be fully cold rolled (column 5, lines 4-16). As noted above, even though the fully cold formed threads are not desirable they are nonetheless disclosed. See In re Boe, 148 USPQ 507 (CCPA 1966). Rallis further disclose the coupling to be formed of the AISI 4130 or an AISI 8630 steel (column 4, line 63,64).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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Claim 1, 3-9 and 24-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hermanson (US 5,334,268) in view of Rallis (US 6,413,326). Hermanson discloses a sucker rod coupling comprising a hollow cylindrical coupling (12) having internal threads and an outer wear layer. The wear layer comprises a hardness of greater than 40 HRC (column 3, line 45-48), a thickness of at least 0.010 inches (column 3, line 33), a surface finish of 63Ra (column 3, line 52) and is a 76-M-50-S spray metal (column 3, line 36). The hardness of the coupling is disclosed as greater than 23 HRC which is read as being inclusive of the claimed *about* 27HRC. The specific spray would inherently be within the claimed mesh range and the steel is a low carbon, alloy steel. The wear layer being sprayed on and the tempering to provide the hardness are product-by-process limitations wherein only the final product is considered for patentability. See In re Mrosi, 218 USPQ 289 (Fed. Cir. 1983). Hermanson does not disclose the specific metal of the coupling nor the threads being fully cold rolled. Rallis disclose a coupling to be made of the AISI 4130 or an AISI 8630 steel (column 4, line 63,64). At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to make the coupling of Hermanson out of AISI 4134 or AISI 8630 as disclosed in Rallis since Hermanson discloses "any capable metal" (column 3, line 14) and Rallis disclose an equivalent steel. In the discussion of the prior art, particularly Hermanson, Rallis teaches that it had been recognized to fully cold roll the threads of Hermanson (top of column 5). Even though Rallis concludes that it is not desirable to fully cold form the hardened threads of Hermanson it is nonetheless disclosed. See In re Boe, 148 USPQ 507 (CCPA 1966). Therefore, at the time the

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invention was made, it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to form the threads of Hermanson by fully cold formation since Rallis teaches that it has been recognized to have Hermanson's threads be fully cold formed. Rallis indicates that the fully cold rolled threads provide for improved fatigue resistance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 3-9 and 24-27 are alternatively rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Rallis (US 6,413,326). Rallis discloses a sucker rod coupling formed a internally threaded hollow cylindrical blank member, referencing the US patent number 5,334,268 to Hermanson (column 2, lines 16-30 and again at column 5, lines 4-16) which teaches the specifics of coupling as discussed above. Rallis further disclose the threads on the sucker rod coupling having the material properties of Hermanson to be fully cold rolled (column 5, lines 4-16). As noted above, even though the fully cold formed threads are not desirable they are nonetheless disclosed. See In re Boe, 148 USPQ 507 (CCPA 1966). Rallis further disclose the coupling to be formed of the AISI 4130 or an AISI 8630 steel (column 4, line 63,64).

In response to Remarks

Applicant argues that Rallis does not disclose the fully cold rolled threads at a hardness of at least about 27HRC but instead discloses that the coupling has not been developed beyond about 23HRC as discussed in the Background and in the invention itself discloses a process where the threads are not fully cold rolled. In response, the examiner agrees that the Rallis invention does not anticipate the claims by virtue of the claims requiring fully cold rolled threads. However, the examiner maintains the in the discussion of the prior art/Background the disclosure of Rallis continues to anticipate the claims. The claims have been amended to require a hardness of "at least about 27 HRC" which still anticipated by the range of "about 23 HRC" disclosed in Rallis. Indeed, *about 27 HRC* reads on *about 23 HRC* particularly when considered light of the open ended ranges associated with each hardness.

Applicant argues that the combination of Hermanson and Rallis would not be obvious because Rallis teaches away from the combination. In response, the examiner is aware that invention of Rallis discloses a different process than Hermanson but, that would not necessarily teach away for the combination. Indeed Rallis is only relied upon for the teaching of the particular metal and that cold rolling of the threads is known.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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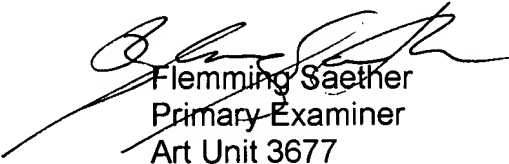
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Flemming Saether whose telephone number is 703-308-0182. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Judy Swann can be reached on 703-306-4115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Flemming Saether
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3677